

UO COMICS AND CARTOON STUDIES PRESENTS



VOLUME 1

ART DUCKO

ISSUE 1

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Special thanks to
Michael Allred

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LOUIS CICALESSE

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The idea for Art Ducko came to me last February. I was between classes, with about 40 minutes of time to kill, and so I started browsing the magazine rack outside of PLC. But nothing popped out at me. I wasn't in the mood to read the latest campus news from the Emerald, or the in-depth human interest stories of Ethos, or any pages of text in general. I realized I wanted to read some cartoons. Each publication had the occasional panel tied to the story with which it shared the page, but I wanted more. I figured that there should be a student magazine completely devoted to comics for students like me – the perfect vehicle to fill-up a short space of time in an otherwise crowded day. So I went on a long walk thinking about this comics magazine. I got so lost in the thought that I was late to my next class.

If my experience making this magazine has a common theme it would be surprise. When I first proposed the idea to the head of the comics minor, Ben "Sugar Daddy" Saunders, I was surprised how much enthusiasm he had for the idea. When we started recruiting students to join and work on the publication I was surprised how many people turned up. When we were coming up with a name for the magazine and I jokingly said in a moment of brainstorming, "what if we called it Art Ducko?" I was surprised that the name caught on (In my mind it was just a silly pun). From first discussing the notion to soliciting content to our first Artist Writer Meet and Greet I have been pleasantly surprised at every turn.

So: it's been almost one year since I first had the idea for a cartoon magazine and now one year later you are holding the premier issue of Art Ducko in your hands. I would like to thank the Comics and Cartoon Studies minor, the English department, the UO Cultural Forum, and my wonderful team of editors and contributors who made this all happen.

We here at Art Ducko want to be more than a comics magazine. We want to foster a strong comics culture at the university, have meaningful discussions about comics, and comic oriented events. We want the Cartoon and Comics program to be a reason people flock to this school. If you want to be part of growing this culture or would like to write a letter to the editor then email us at uocomics@gmail.com and let your speech bubble be heard.

Alex Milshtein







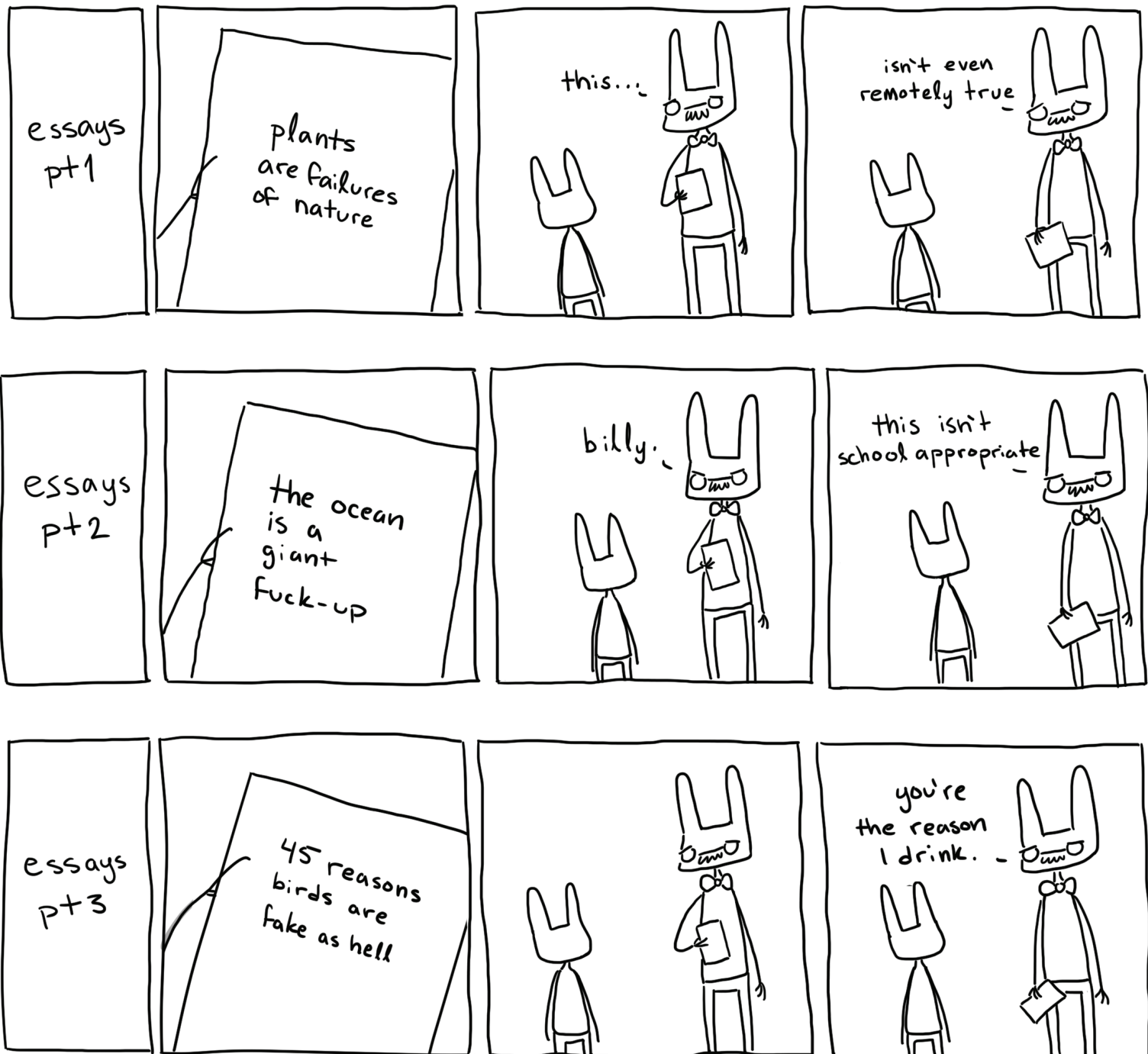




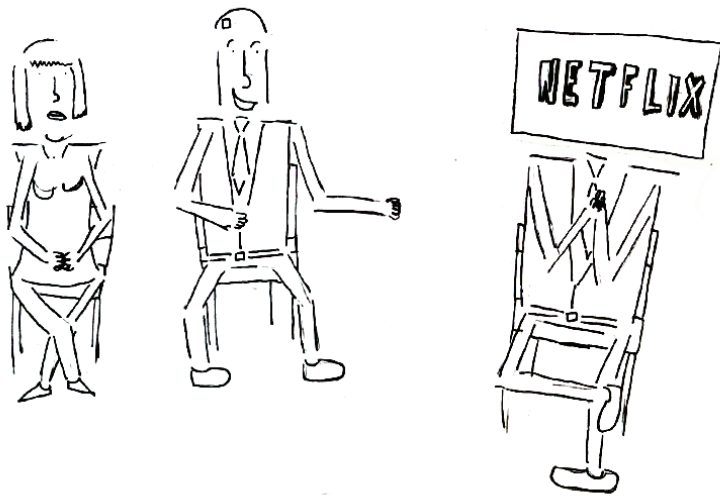


DEEP FRIED DUCK STRIPS

KERETH CURLISS



ALEX MILSHTEIN



I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR SAVING OUR MARRIAGE

MATT SHUMACHER

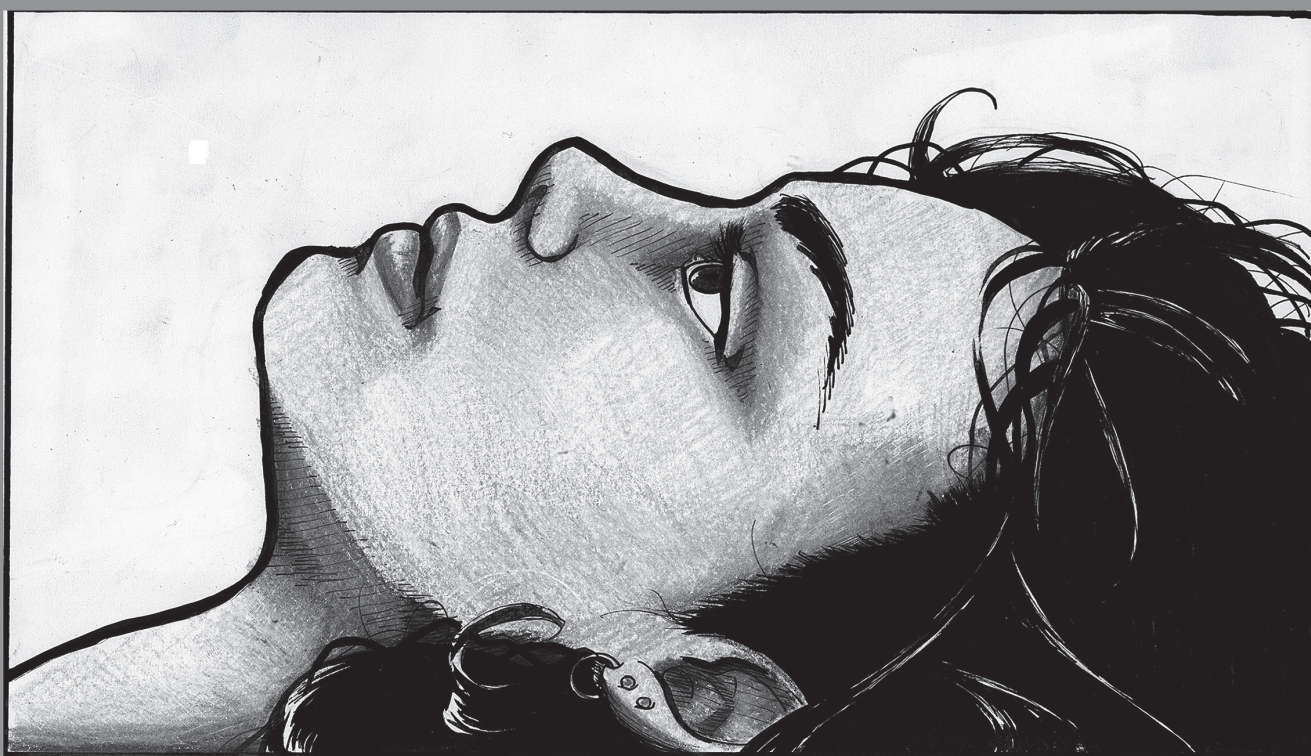
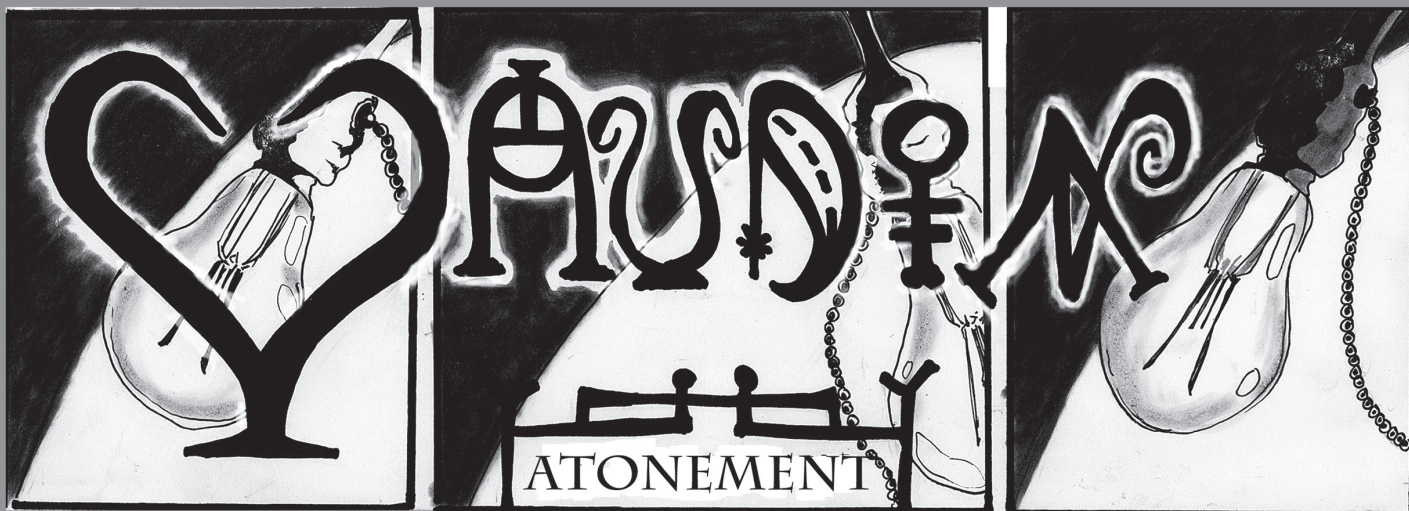


CARDIAC ARREST

EMILY FAULCONER



"Group Invites"

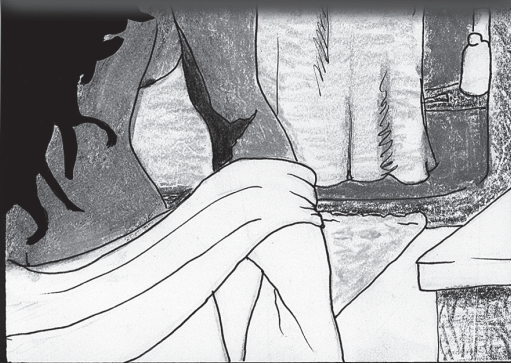


14

*I never dream when
I sleep...
some might say I sleep
like the dead*



I haven't showered for three days



I guess I haven't brushed my teeth for three days



Ever since we started the case I haven't had much time



Today I got to sleep in- we have a meeting with Mama Raymond, the cop friendly local voodoo expert.

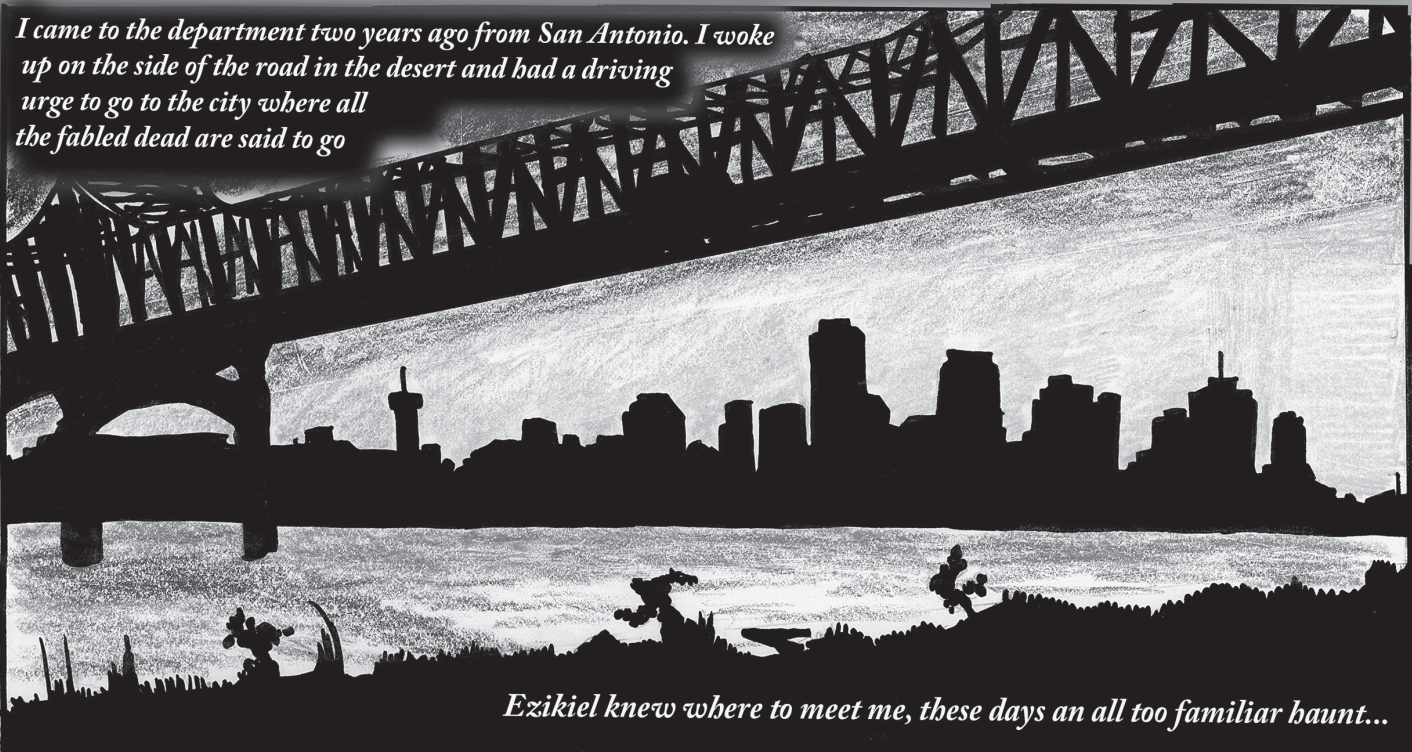


I've never thought the crimes have anything to do with voodoo, just some deluded human perpetrator...



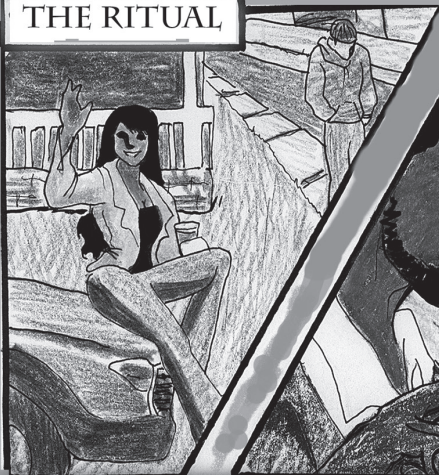
Of course, Raymond reminds me we haven't solved every case

I came to the department two years ago from San Antonio. I woke up on the side of the road in the desert and had a driving urge to go to the city where all the fabled dead are said to go



Ezekiel knew where to meet me, these days an all too familiar haunt...

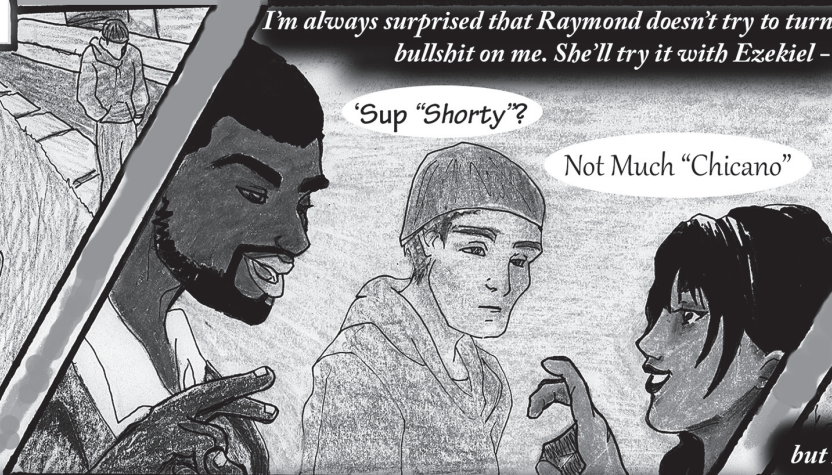
THE RITUAL



I'm always surprised that Raymond doesn't try to turn any voodoo bullshit on me. She'll try it with Ezekiel -

'Sup "Shorty"?

Not Much "Chicano"



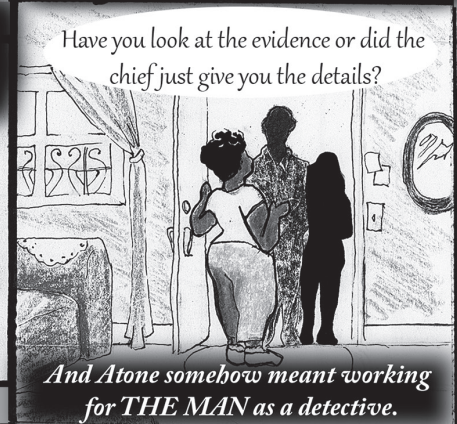
but I guess I'm immune to her charms

My past is glossed over so fine, everyone has the same aversion to the subject. I don't remember who I was, where I'm from - when I'm from. The only thing I knew was I had to Atone.



Welcome Detectives

Thank you for taking time to speak with us Mrs. Raymond



Have you look at the evidence or did the chief just give you the details?

And Atone somehow meant working for THE MAN as a detective.

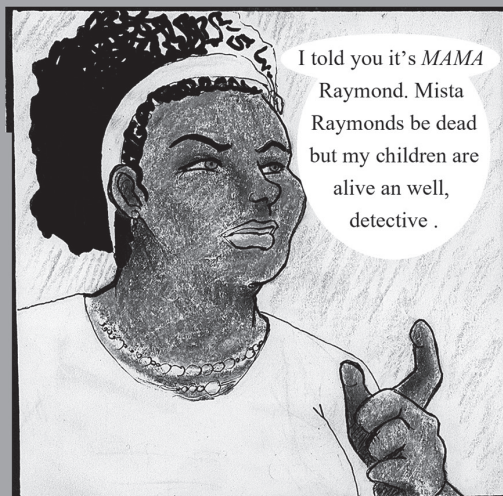


It dosna take photos to see the pity.



I've heard of these circumstances ... before.

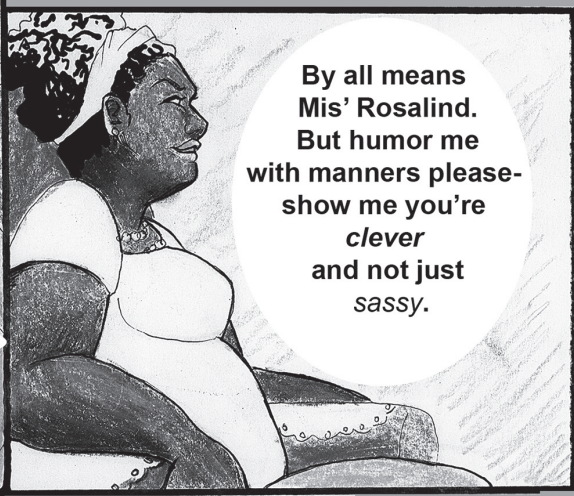
Yes Mrs. Raymond, that's why we value your expertise so much



I told you it's MAMA Raymond. Mista Raymonds be dead but my children are alive an well, detective .



Yes, and we are here to discuss the DEAD, not the living, Mrs. Raymond.



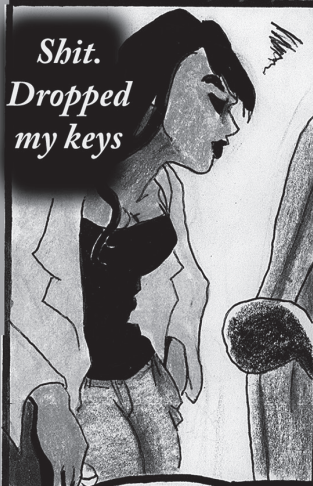
By all means Mis' Rosalind. But humor me with manners please- show me you're clever and not just sassy.

THE CASE



I let Ezekiel say goodbye. One of the perks to being the 'Bad cop'.

*Shit.
Dropped
my keys*



Hey! Rosalind,
these your keys?

Yeah than-



*I don't have any powers. I can still get hurt- I just
don't die. Bullets coincidentally miss me, stuff like that.*

*So death
is another
thing I
don't have
access to.
Just pain.*

*With every
bullet I
watch the
inevitable
pass me by*



*I have no idea what I'm supposed to atone
for. I don't have the whys, just the how.*

Sometimes
Raymond says
"You ain't a spiritual
person. You just blind an'
don't give a damn." I
guess my secret's a cruel irony

Hey! I was just
gonna call you! We
have a lead for
you to ch-

We've been targeted
and are under fire!

What??
Are those
shots?
Wh-

Bronson!

SHUT THE
FUCK UP!!

Requesting backup
Freret and Phillip!
Possible sniper
from the south
east

Whee-oo! Whee-oo! eeeeeeee

THE CAVALRY ARRIVES

Fuck FUCK fuck!
My poor fucking car!!

It looks better than
mine... we should hitch
a ride to the station
and check out
th' lead.

You really think
they found the perp?

I..Sorry...It's
this case, isn't it?

Girl, since when do you smoke?

I don't know...

I just thought I'd ask since
you smell like my Gran'ma

AT THE STATION

You're fuckin kidding...

The guy outside
Raymonds

Shit! I want a warrant for attempted
murder of a police officer- damage
to property-

Fucker turned my car
into swiss cheese! I-

Who knows?
He might just be
involved somehow;
maybe he's the
next vic.

Yeah well,
don't go a'vigilante
on me if you want to stay
on th'case- any fuckups
and Imma pull y'off

I know how
to do my
job BOY

Coonass prick

Look.. I'm not good at this...

Spit it out Bronson

Fine. What is
it about this case?

Excuse me?

Yah the best detective in a long time.
You're intelligent, determined, and
have the best success rate...

AND?

Wait-
Rosie

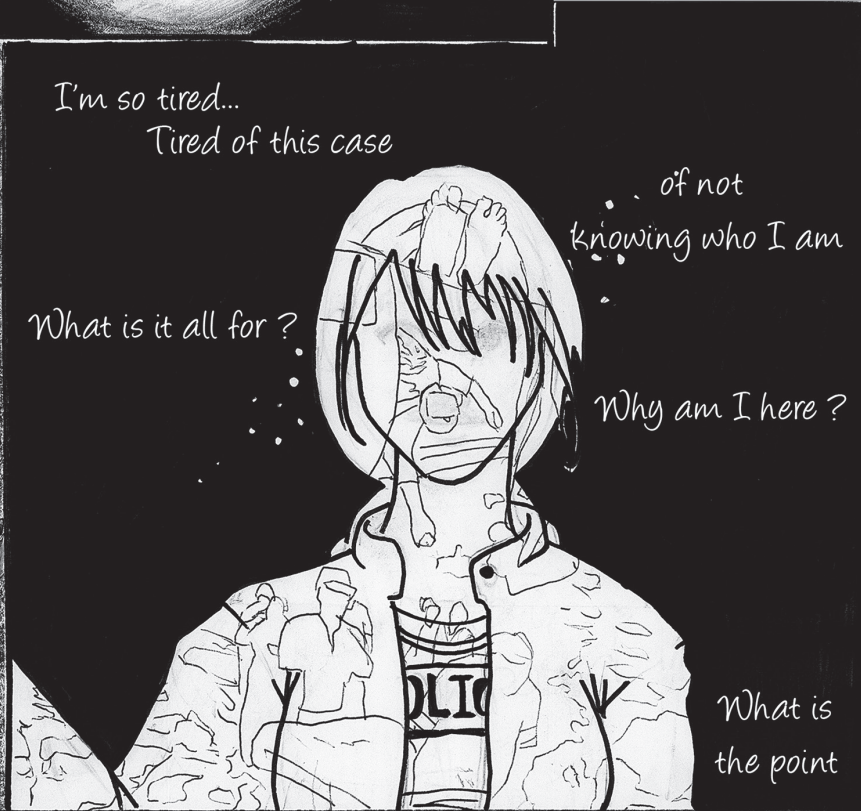
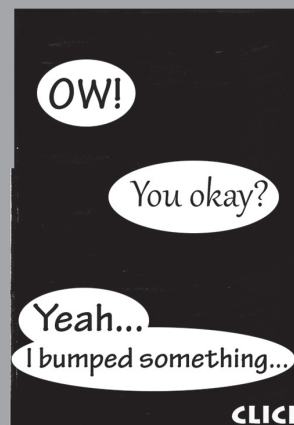
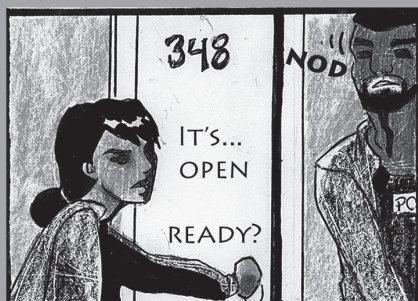
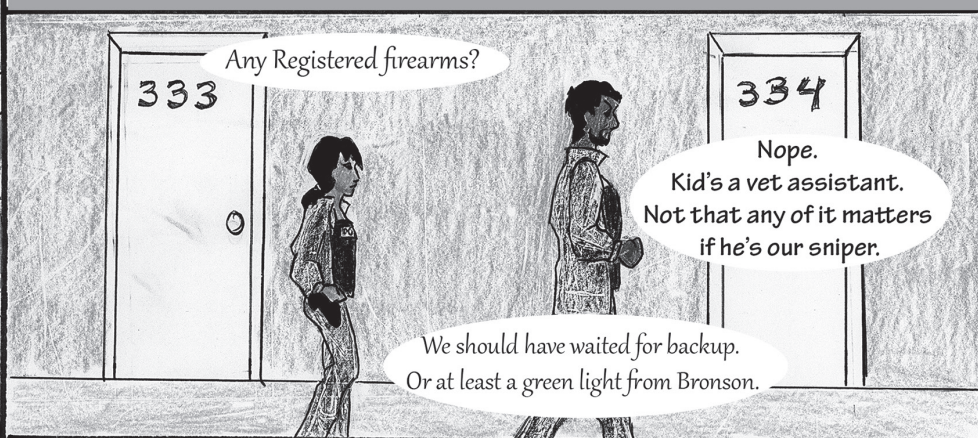
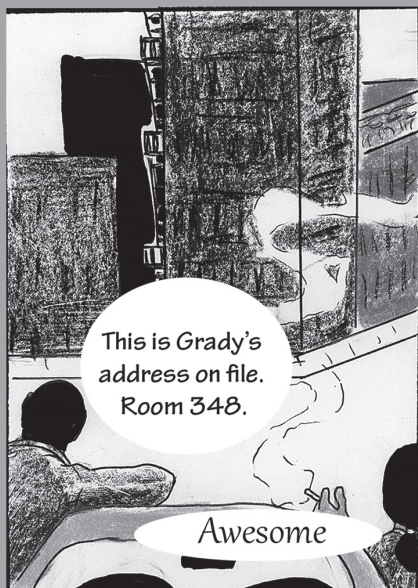
I know you think that Ima just the
idiot that runs the show. But Imma
worried about you-

You don't need to babysit me Chief
- Worry about yourself

...

Fine Rosie

... fine



Will anything make a
difference?

I put everything into solving the problem

Each time, I think
this might be the one...

That I can finally rest...

That I might get an
answer

But I don't even know

and then it's on to the
next

and the next

and the next

and the next

I'm so empty

GEORGE HERRIMAN'S KRAZY KAT

ZANE MOWRY

When George Herriman's comic strip *Krazy Kat* (1913-1944) first appeared in newspapers, it generated a lot of strong opinions. The average newspaper reader seemed to think that *Krazy Kat* was overly highbrow and confusing, while elitist readers considered comic strips a lowbrow art form. Many comics fans complained that the strip was too complicated or convoluted, even though the strip repeated the same plot almost daily for over thirty years. Now even Herriman's personal life creates controversy; recently certain scholars have claimed that Herriman was the first successful black cartoonist, while others deny that Herriman was black at all. Modern readers either hate or love Herriman's work, views towards *Krazy Kat* almost always falling at extremes. It takes some determination to sift through all of the beliefs swirling around *Krazy Kat* in order to enjoy the strip on its own merits, but in the end such effort is greatly rewarded.

Krazy Kat doesn't get a lot of recognition today, but its artistic influence remains substantial. Walt Disney was a great admirer of Herriman's work, and expressed his condolences to Herriman's

granddaughter in a heartfelt letter after the artist died. In Disney's early cartoons, Mickey Mouse bears more than a passing resemblance to Herriman's own abrasive mouse, Ignatz. The Looney Tunes characters Wile E. Coyote and Road Runner are in part a tribute to Herriman's two most iconic characters, *Krazy Kat* and Ignatz. Cartoonists such as Charles Schulz, Bill Watterson, Art Spiegelman, and Will Eisner cite *Krazy Kat* as a formative influence, and tributes to the artist have appeared in comic strips ranging from Calvin and Hobbes and Pogo to Mutts and even Garfield. Director Quentin Tarantino is a *Krazy Kat* fan: in the climactic scene of Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, the actor Samuel L. Jackson wears a t-shirt bearing a Herriman sketch of *Krazy*, Ignatz, and Officer Pupp. Pablo Picasso may be Herriman's most famous fan of all; while living in Paris, he purportedly read *Krazy Kat* strips every week with the author Gertrude Stein. *Krazy Kat* has inspired a novel, critically acclaimed works of poetry, and even a jazz ballet, maintaining a clear cultural presence even today.

Even so, Herriman's lack of renown remains unsurprising, as he was not particularly well known in his own time. In a tale which sadly seems to apply to many of the comics greats, Herriman's work was perhaps most marginalized when the artist was at the height of his talent. The more creative ground *Krazy Kat* broke, the more "bizarre" or "confusing" it was deemed by Herriman's contemporaries. Such claims were hard to deny, as even the basic premise of *Krazy Kat* is indisputably outlandish. This central theme can be reduced to a love triangle featuring the strip's three

major players. The titular Krazy Kat is in love with Ignatz Mouse; however, Ignatz spurns Krazy's attentions, and throws a brick at the Kat in each strip in a malevolent and oft-successful attempt to strike it in the head. Inexplicably, Krazy interprets this as a sign of the mouse's affections, and only falls deeper in love each time Ignatz hits him with the brick. Meanwhile, police dog Officer Pupp bears an unrequited love for Krazy, and attempts to thwart Ignatz's schemes by carting him off to the Coconino County jail.



This strange little love triangle only marks the beginning of the bizarreness. Krazy Kat is ambiguously gendered, sometimes appearing to be male, sometimes female, and sometimes of no sex at all. Additionally, the landscape of Krazy Kat is in a constant state of flux, changing its form in almost every panel. Meanwhile, the brick-bashing love triangle is the basis for the vast majority of the strips drawn for a comic that ran for over thirty years. Such peculiarities can intimidate new readers and perhaps entirely discourage some from ever reading the comic. But

those who stick with Krazy Kat soon find that things are not as odd and confusing as they first appear. Instead, Krazy Kat's repetitious plot delights with its endless variations and surprises, fostering creativity in simplicity. The changing landscape focuses the reader's attention upon the dynamic between the characters in the strip, lending Krazy Kat the uncrowded design of a minimalist stage production and thereby reducing the strip's action to its essential elements. And instead of becoming a distraction, the Kat's ambiguous gender highlights the very confusion caused by preconceived notions of sex and gender roles in real life. The idiosyncrasies of Krazy Kat are an important part of its appeal, while the supposed "challenge" that Krazy Kat presents to readers is vastly overrated.

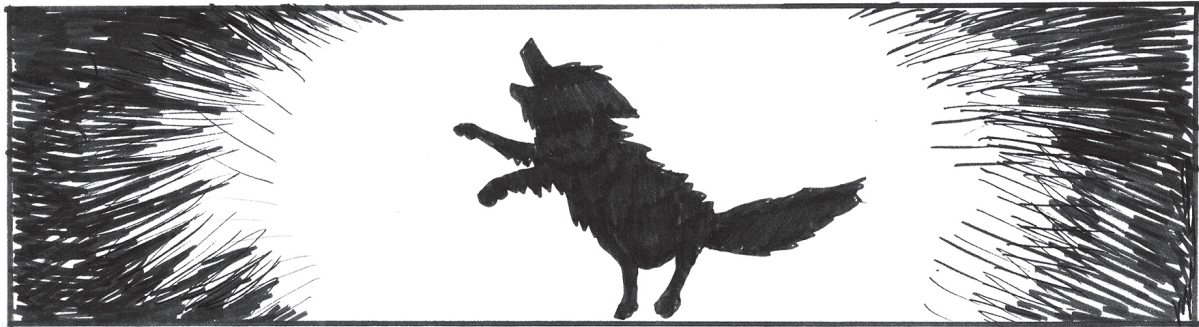
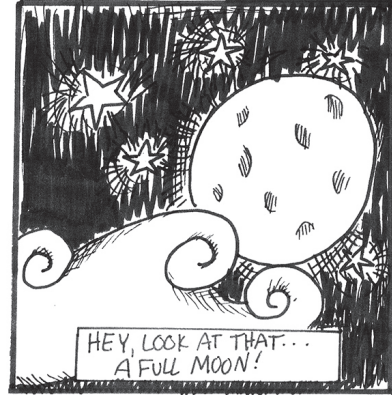
Even if Krazy Kat is not particularly challenging to read, it still offers plenty of intellectual fodder, and Krazy Kat's ambiguous gender is only the beginning of a series of profound explorations of identity and individuality that surround Herriman's work. For instance, Krazy has an extremely distinct accent that would seem to mark the Kat out as a foreigner, yet Krazy's odd vernacular cannot be traced to any particular group or nation. In fact, Herriman's Kat is gendered, yet genderless; "raced," yet race-less; and even loved, yet hated in the same moment via Ignatz's brick. Herriman encapsulates what seem to be diametrically opposed binaries within a single individual, tearing down commonly-held notions about race and gender in the process. In doing so, he forces his readers to view his characters as individuals rather than as members of a particular group. This is distinct from common

conceptions of post-racial identity, where skin tones merge and accents disappear; instead, Herriman retains racial signifiers in his work while disallowing any firm real-world associations with these signifiers. Such explorations are especially relevant in an age where those who would like to maintain cultural forms of identity often clash with those who would like to move “beyond” race and gender completely.

Herriman’s experiments with identity also cast an intriguing light upon his own life. Herriman was born in New Orleans to Creole parents and listed as “mulatto” on a government census. Ten years after his birth, Herriman’s family moved to Los Angeles, probably to escape rapidly increasing racial tension in Louisiana. It seems that the family was able to “pass” for white in California, thereby avoiding racial discrimination. Confusion regarding this move and Herriman’s heritage has led to much debate. Some scholars like to claim Herriman was the first successful black cartoonist, which may be true in a purely physiological sense; however, Herriman did not identify as black, and in fact nobody was aware of Herriman’s Creole heritage until almost thirty years after his death. Some deny that Herriman was black

at all, citing questionable practices by census-takers at the time of Herriman’s birth; however, recent evidence showing that all of Herriman’s relatives were also listed as “mulatto” would belie this claim. Others assert that Herriman was deeply tormented by his decision to pass for white, and that his work reflects this distress; this claim is hard to either prove or disprove, but it does lead to many interesting readings of Krazy Kat. What is certainly clear is that Herriman was deeply concerned with issues of identity and being, and that his work explores these topics magnificently. Krazy Kat only becomes more fascinating, rewarding, and enjoyable with further knowledge about the comic. But the strip is perhaps best enjoyed on its own terms. Delightful supporting characters like Mock Duck, Don Coyote, Mrs. Quack-Wakk, and Joe Stork add entirely new dimensions to Krazy Kat, while the setting of Coconino County has its own strong personality, Herriman redeploying the weird, almost alien monoliths of his beloved Desert Southwest to great effect. Krazy Kat consistently elevates the familiar to the sublime, and thereby truly deserves a place among the great artistic works of the twentieth century.

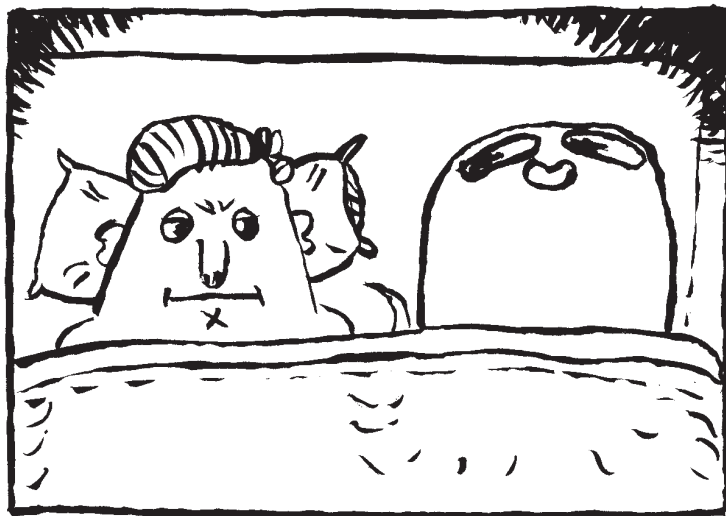


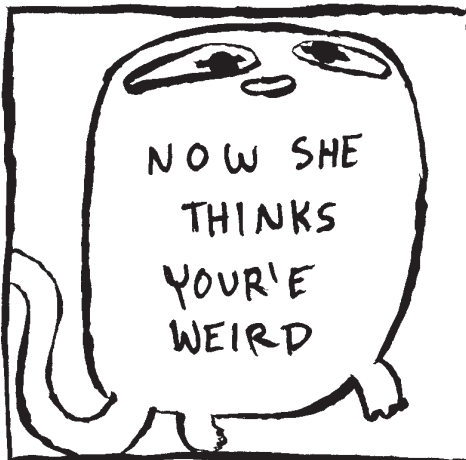
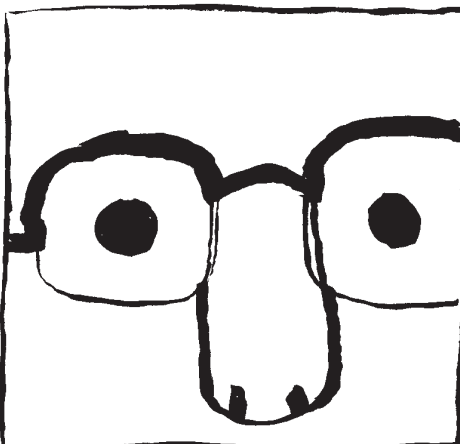




CRAP GHOST

BY JALAN EMBER







INSIDE THE HEAD OF A MADMAN

LOUIS CICALEASE

AN INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL ALLRED

ART DUCKO: First of all, thank you very much for agreeing to do this. I know you're a busy man.

MIKE ALLRED: Thank you for caring [laughs]. Thank you for your interest.

AD: Who are some of your major influences who got you into comics?

MA: Well, my older brother is the reason why I even know what a comic book is. Growing up, the house was full of comics, and it was all because of Lee. And so, him being my big brother, the stuff he was interested in made an impression on me. And he had great tastes, so a lot of the artists that are considered legends now were just there. Artists like Jack Kirby and Alex Toth, and Joe Kubert and Jim Steranko, Barry Windsor-Smith—I was just really fortunate that all this quality, classic, timeless work was surrounding me as I was growing up.

AD: What are some of your favorite comics from your own career?

MA: Personal favorites of my own? [Laughs.] All of them, really. The reason I do them is because I enjoy them; otherwise I would quit doing them. Of course, what means the most to me is Madman. He's kind of become my alter ego, and he's been the vehicle through which I can tell more personal stories—which is strange, because he's a reanimated corpse who's surrounded by robots and aliens and mutants. A lot of personal stuff is filtered through Frank Einstein. And Red Rocket 7—being a huge fan of music and rock and roll, and to be able to tell the history of rock and roll through the eyes of an alien clone—is something I'm really proud of. And then the writers I've been able to work with actually have made it, in some

ways, more gratifying. It's certainly more challenging, but it's also more gratifying, ultimately, because I'm working inside of somebody else's head. If I had to pick a favorite, today I would pick Silver Surfer because it's where all my energy and enthusiasm is focused, and of course that focus always changes. I just did a Madman 3D Special, and when we did that it came out even better than I thought it would and it became my favorite book ever. So what's always most important to me is what I'm currently working on or what I'm about to work on. I really want whatever is contemporary in my life to be the most important thing I've ever done. I can appreciate the milestones and progressions of the past, but the day that something I've done a long time ago is my favorite will be a very depressing day. I really want to always be excited about what's happening now.

AD: That's great to hear. Do the experiences of working with different writers vary? Like how does working with Neil Gaiman compare to Peter Milligan, for example?

MA: They definitely vary. With Neil Gaiman, for instance, it was the first time I read a script that read like a personal letter to me. That really surprised and impressed me. It wasn't just a generic script. As he's writing it, he's calling me by name and suggesting things that he feels I might have strengths towards and things like that. That was really impressive because when you're starting in the business you think that there are very strict formats and certain rules to follow, and you want to make sure you do it right so that your editors don't think you're an amateur. And reading a script that just had this very casual, but very intelligent, air about it... what it taught me very early on is that there are no rules, and what's most important for any scriptwriter is to just communicate the story as best you can. To think that there are rules

that are going to inhibit you and be very stiff . . . it's very liberating to know that those rules don't exist. So it's fun when I'm working with these different writers, and I've been really lucky—I've really worked with the best people in the business. And of course there're very similar ways of writing a comic book—you know there's that page-panel format—but then to see the subtle differences in how someone will communicate their ideas . . . most famous is how Alan Moore will pretty much write a novel in a panel description. Now, that's great, but it can also be intimidating, and it can be confusing. There's only so much you can put into a panel, and ultimately what Alan Moore is trying to do is, again, communicate as best he can what he wants in the panel, but it doesn't mean, necessarily, that all that detail has to be there. He just wants to make sure that the artist he's working with is very clear on the mood and setting and tone, and so he provides all this lush, descriptive text. Another writer might just have one sentence stating the location, and then leave it to the artist to fill it in. And both ways work brilliantly. Ultimately, you're going to be judged by the idea, so a great writer can have a great idea and communicate it in six words or in six paragraphs. And, personally, I prefer the six words because I think there's more clarity and it's more efficient, especially in a collaboration. And it's also the way I write my own stuff because I know what's in my head, so when I'm writing a script for myself it's pretty much just a shorthand outline because I already know what I want. And, mostly, I try to put the dialogue down on the script so I can make sure it speaks naturally, and I won't pressure myself because sometime when I'm drawing it, I want the dialogue to feel more natural and not be locked into it so I can improvise the dialogue rather than have very specific words that I need to stick with in the script. So some writers will be very clear about their dialogue, and others will change it after they've seen what I've drawn. And so, it's all very loose and natural and flexible and organic. So there are a lot of similarities, but after a while you definitely start to notice very specific characteristics of each writer and how they differ from each other.

AD: When you're starting a new project and looking for collaborators, do you typically get together with a writer first and come up with an idea, or do editors pair you together, or does it vary?

MA: It varies. With iZombie, Chris Roberson had the general idea of the series, which I liked, and he had been talking with Shelly Bond, the editor at Vertigo, and when she was asking about the art, he said, "I'd like to work with someone like Mike Allred." And she said, "Why don't we ask him?" and they did. What was great about it was I liked the initial concept, but I also had my own contribution, which he liked, and so there was a really great back-and-forth. With no exception, with every writer I've worked with I've always felt like my input was welcome. No one has been so precious about their idea or their script that they aren't also willing and interested to hear what I would like to do with the idea, or expand upon the idea, or enhance or clarify it. Those are the best relationships, the ones where you're not feeling like you're stepping on each other's toes. And if you have an idea, and your collaborator rejects it, you're not going to feel offended that they rejected that particular idea. There have been some things that have been in scripts that I didn't care for or I wanted to change, and I've been encouraged to make those criticisms, and vice versa, and I've had an idea that's been shot down, but that's the collaborative process. You end up lifting each other up, if it's clicking. Like right now, I just feel like Dan Slott and I...our chemistry is just perfect. We're just providing each other an incredible amount of fuel, and we're having the best time.

AD: Yeah, I've really been loving Silver Surfer so far.

MA: Thanks. I'm so excited about it and where we're going with it. I'm very happy.

AD: Do you have any favorite comics coming out right now by other creators?

MA: Archer Coe is a book that Jamie Rich wrote this year, which I really loved. I love Mark Waid and Chris Samnee's Daredevil. And an Italian artist named Paolo Leandri did a series called Nightworld, with Adam McGovern, who scripted it, and it's just crazy weird cool. I really loved that book. There's lots of stuff.

AD: Do you have specific art tools that you really like to use?

MA: Oh yeah, I'll try new stuff all the time. I'm always looking for better tools. I have bags and boxes full of art supplies that I've tried and didn't like. I'm always eager to try to grow and progress. Having said that, over the last couple of years it's really boiled down to very consistent tools. I use a twist-erase clicker pencil, and I like nice, soft lead, like either an HB or classic #2-style lead, or 2B and softer lead because I like smudging the graphite and getting extra textures. But I don't like sharpening a pencil, and with these clicker pencils I can get a sharp enough point just by using it. I don't see myself ever using another pencil. I'll often use a kneaded eraser because it doesn't leave a lot of eraser debris afterwards, and it's therapeutic to stretch and pull. And after that I ink with Windsor & Newton brushes, Series 7. I've tried other brushes and nothing has come close to having the consistent quality of the Windsor & Newton Series 7 brushes. And I generally use a #1, and sometimes a #2. #3 is a little too big. For ink I generally use Higgins Black Magic mixed with Speedball Super Black. Higgins Black Magic tends to be a little bit watery, and Speedball Super Black is thick. Mixing them together, for me, creates the perfect ink. And I can vary the consistency by just adding a little bit more of one or the other, so I get a nice, rich, controllable black ink. And that's really what my toolbox boils down to. Those have been my consistent go-tos for over ten years. Oh, and for markers, I should say, sometimes it's nice to just break out a pen and fix something or do some detail. And gener-

ally I like to ink everything with a brush, but Darwyn Cooke turned me onto these PITT Pens by Faber-Castell. And markers in the past . . . they say that they're permanent ink, but they'll fade. So there's original art of mine that I'll see again and the ink is faded. It's ridiculous. I have yet to see these PITT Pens fade.

AD: There are always lots of people who have hopes of going into the comics business. Do you have any advice for them?

MA: The best advice I can give is to always do it because you enjoy it, and do everything you can to maintain that enjoyment, that passion. I strongly believe that talent is merely a very enthusiastic interest in something, and I've noticed people, when they first started out, whose stuff doesn't look very good. But they have such a passion for it that they keep doing it, and the more they do it the better they get at it, and the better they get at it the more their passion for it increases because you enjoy it more as you're improving. And so it's this beautiful cycle of progression as your affection for what you're doing increases the quality of your work, which is what people call talent.



Madman original character by Michael Allred

CULTURAL FORUM

Who we are

We are a program of the Erb Memorial Union. We produce co-curricular & extra curricular events that are created, marketed and managed by students.

Our Work during academic year 2013 - 2014

- 5,800 hours of paid employment for UO students
- Sponsorship of 31 UO Activities/Groups
- Sponsorship of 9 Eugene Community Groups/Businesses
- 82 UO student performers and artists featured
- 210 programming hours and 64 events

Our Mission

The mission of the Cultural Forum is to provide University of Oregon students, and the campus community, with exposure to and experience with the breadth and depth of human expression through productions focusing on contemporary issues, film, performing arts, music, visual art and management of the EMU permanent art collection.

Learn of our current activities and events:

cultural@uoregon.edu, culture.uoregon.edu

 UOCForum

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